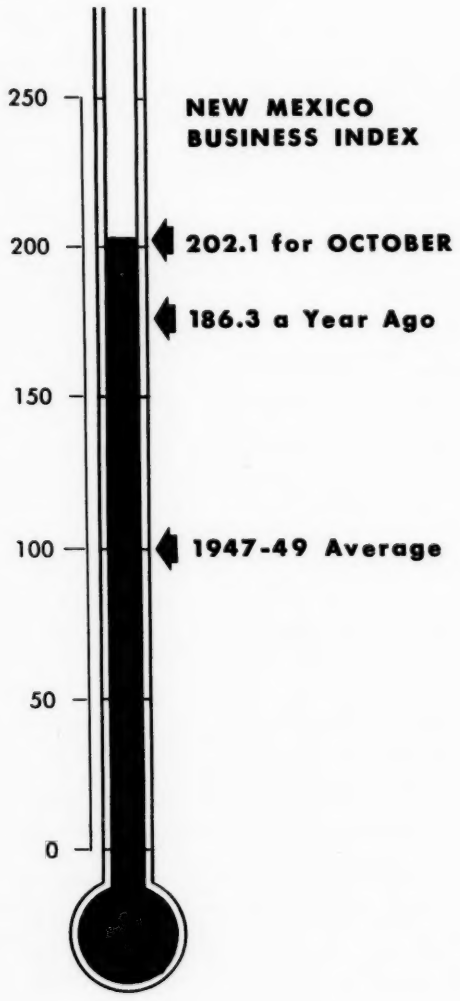
DECEMBER 1955

New Mexico BUSINESS



Powered by rising retail

sales and growing banking volume, our Index of Business Activity in New Mexico reached 202.1 in October, making this month the third highest of 1955 and the fourth highest of our nine-year series of indexes.

October business was 3.5 per cent greater than September's and 8.5 per cent above that of October 1954.

Retail sales for the month totalled almost $88 million, which is about $2.5 million above September's total and $3 million below July, the highest month of this year. Sales were strongest in the apparel and appliance divisions. Automotive sales registered a slight rise over September as the new 1956 models entered the market. Sales of building materials eased off but were still higher than those of 1954.

Banking figures for October and November showed significant gains, compared with other months of the year and previous years. Since bank debits and loans are good indicators of trends ahead, a Happy New Year is

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ELECTRONICS: A 'Natural' for New Mexico . . . . page 2

Electronics: *A 'Natural' for New Mexico*

By Fremont Kutnewsky*

NEW MEXICO's unique concentration of special weapons research centers is fostering a new industry in the state: the development and manufacture of electronic equipment.

In just three years, the number of electronic equipment manufacturing firms in New Mexico has increased from zero to eleven. They employ between 200 and 400 persons, according to the flow of contracts, and their total production is expected to reach nearly $2 million this year.

SUITABLE TO NEW MEXICO

Certain characteristics of today's electronics industry have helped these firms make a start. First of all, the field is young enough to make room for newcomers: developments are so rapid and varied that new demands are being created all the time. Markets are so specialized in some cases that the manufacturer works on practically a custom basis. This gives an advantage to the small operator. He can design and turn out 50 or 100 units of an item while a larger concern would be working out a production schedule for it.

The multiplicity of the market's needs enable a small beginner to tackle only those jobs that fit in with his limited equipment. Hence a saving in capital investment. And since many electronic controls and instruments are combinations of basic parts, the assembler is spared the heavy costs of starting from scratch. Two of the New Mexico firms discussed in this article began in home garages, and the capitalization of all eleven firms is still less than one million dollars.

Talent is valued more than tradition. A young man with ideas can compete successfully with large well-known organizations in the solving of some specific electronic problems.

In contrast to the manufacturer of, let us say, a new candy bar, the developer of a much-needed electronic control is spared efforts and investments in promotion and sales. Sometimes, one listing in a technical publication brings him the business. This advantage may not last very long in this fast-moving business, but it usually is enough to get a newcomer started.

The electronics industry has one final characteristic that is of special help to a manufacturer in New Mexico. Many electronic instruments are light in weight compared to value. Therefore, freight charges are a relatively small fraction of the cost of each item.

MARKETS AND MANPOWER

Markets and manpower are the crucial factors, however. In New Mexico, the special weapons centers are the main markets. Prime contractors of the Atomic Energy Commission like to place orders for certain equipment locally so that the engineer-designers can watch production step by step. This is even more important when the electronics firm is doing much of the development work, too.

Albuquerque is the location of the Santa Fe Operations Office of the AEC. This center is directing atomic weapons work from the Great Lakes to Eniwetok. One of its main contractors is the Sandia Corp., also located in Albuquerque. Sandia develops all the non-nuclear phases of atomic weapons, taking the orders of the three military services, and subcontracting through thousands of commercial outfits who contribute to the actual development and early production of atomic weapons by manufacturing the necessary components, instruments, and equipment.

A recent report showed that Sandia executed some 50,000 separate procurement contracts in one year and is doing business regularly with more than 3,600 vendors in 43 states and several foreign countries.

Another prime contractor in Albuquerque is ACF Industries, Inc. Like Sandia, this firm deals with local subcontractors whenever this is possible.

Other organizations which utilize electronic instruments and controls are: the Air Force Research and Development Center, Kirtland Air Force Base, Albuquerque; Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory, Los Alamos; the Air Development Center, Holloman Air Force Base, Alamogordo; and White Sands Proving Ground, Alamogordo.

In addition to providing markets, these organizations have created a large reservoir of qualified engineers and technicians. In some cases, electronic engineers have left their government jobs to establish businesses of their own. In other cases, skilled workers merely work for the electronic equipment firms on a part-time basis. The availability of these occasional helpers is an asset to a small firm beset with a fluctuating order and contract situation.

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HISTORIES TELL THE STORY

A more definite idea of the progress of these firms can be gained from their histories.

Three of Albuquerque's plants are branches of established firms attracted to New Mexico by research contract work. The largest is Lytle Engineering and Manufacturing Co., supplier to the Air Force Research and Development Center at Kirtland. Lytle's plant in Albuquerque has 10,000 square feet of floor space and more than 100 employes. Most of the work involves classified government activities, but Lytle is developing commercial items for national distribution and is preparing a brochure to solicit outside development work. The firm has its main offices in Chicago, but has transferred its production to Albuquerque.

Dale Products, Inc. and the M. F. Johnson Aircraft Engineering Co. set up branch plants about two years ago in Albuquerque because they were doing work for Sandia and Kirtland projects. Their home offices are in Nebraska and New Jersey respectively. Both produce commercial items for the general trade. Dale manufactures resistors, collet knobs, and specialized antennas for aircraft companies. Johnson's standard lines are electro-mechanical controls for aircraft, groundometers, fault-finding bridges, aircraft instrument consoles, and galvanometers.

The pioneer Albuquerque electronics firm is Crown Engineering. This company was established three years ago to service television sets. Later, it obtained contracts for AEC work and built a small plant. When this became too confining, Crown moved to its present site. It is

(continued on page 4)

Electronics Equipment Firms in New Mexico - 1955

COMPANY	ACTIVITIES	PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS OR PROJECTS
Crown Engineering 305 Industrial Ave., NE Albuqueruqe, N. M.	Design, development and manufacturing of electronic, mechanical and electromechanical systems and equipment. Custom work.	Dual-channel Doppler receiver, telemetering transmitter, atomospheric noise recorder developed in conjunction with the National Bureau of Standards. Special projects: computers, radar, and amplifiers.
C-G Electronic Corp. 305 Dallas Ave., NE Albuquerque, N. M.	Manufacturing for national market.	Radio controls for the hobbyist. Also test equipment.
Dale Products 5407 Acoma Rd., SE Albuquerque, N. M.	Home plant: Columbus, Neb. National manufacturer of wire-wound resistors, deposited carbon resistors, antenna. Albuquerque plant works largely for the Sandia Corp. on classified contracts.	Classified AEC research and assembly work.
M. J. Johnson Aircraft Engineering Co. 4401 Lunada Ave. Albuquerque, N. M.	Home plant: Morris Plains, N.J. Has another plant at Pottsville, Pa. Manufacturer of electro-mechanical controls for aircraft, groundometers, galvanometers, aircraft instrument consoles.	Special work for the U. S. Air Force Research and Development Project at Kirtland Air Force Base, Albuquerque. General commercial products planned.
Lytle Engineering & Manufacturing Co. 1404 San Mateo Blvd., SE Albuquerque, N. M.	General office: Chicago, Ill. Plant in Albuquerque devoted to research and development.	Classified work for the U. S. Air Force Research and Development Project at Kirtland Air Force Base. Research and development.
Machine Products & Engineering Co. 1317 Yale Blvd., SE Albuquerque, N. M.	Custom manufacturing. Research and development.	Manufactures oil-well logging instruments for Welltab, Inc. of Santa Fe, N. M. Custom work for AEC projects--electronic parts and assemblies.
Quantum Electronics 1921 Virginia St., NE Albuquerque, N. M.	Manufacturer for national market.	Junction Transistor Analyzer (own design).
Ultradyne Engineering Labs., Inc. 6109 Menaul Blvd., NE Albuquerque, N. M.	Research and manufacturing.	Electronic pressure transducer (own design). Radio code instruction machine (which is rented, not sold). Also, AEC and other research projects.
Eberline Instruments Div. Reynolds Electrical & Engineering Co., Inc. Santa Fe, N. M.	Manufacturing, research, and development.	Portable uranium ore analyzer and special radiation instrumentation.
ARF Products Raton, N. M.	Main plant: Chicago, Ill. Manufacturers of antenna for the armed forces, television equipment, hi-fi record player.	Raton plant manufactures television receiving equipment for local market. Cabinets for one model of home plant's hi-fi record player. Plans to manufacture complete record player.
Welltab, Inc. Santa Fe, N. M.	Manufacturing, research, and development. Markets in Southwest and Texas Gulf area.	Oil well logging instruments. Portable strip chart recorder.

Electronics (continued from page 3)

now making electronic testers and employs from 15 to 40 people.

In 1954, Crown collaborated with the U. S. Weather Bureau in developing machines to detect and record cosmic noises. These are elaborate affairs, taller than a man in height.

Ultradyne Laboratories, Inc. was established in a garage in May 1954, when two young engineers quit their jobs at Sandia and started producing a pressure gage for use in wind tunnel tests, explosions, and so on. It sells for more than $200 and is small enough to conceal in a man's closed fist.

The engineers, Bob Johnson and Pete Church, had their product described in a number of top technical journals. Orders came in from many sources. In a few months, Ultradyne moved into larger quarters in the basement of a hall, and a year later to a factory building. The firm now has 20 employes, including a number of workers from Sandia Corp.

Quantum Electronics, Inc., the newest in the field, has a parallel history. It started a year later than Ultradyne and is still operating in a residential garage. The owners, Thomas E. Lommasson and K. D. Hardin, both employed at Sandia, are producing a transistorized portable test set in their spare time. Radio and teletype manufacturers use this tester on transistors all the way through their assembly lines.

Not all of New Mexico's electronics firms and people are as closely linked to government work. The Eberline Instrument Division of Reynolds Electrical & Engineering Co., Inc. does some research and development for the government, but it also serves private industry, especially in the oil and uranium prospecting fields. Eberline sells products of other manufacturers and also has developed and manufactured radiation instruments and a portable uranium ore analyzer. The latter is illustrated in the December 1955 issue of Fortune. This firm is a division of a large El Paso contracting company.

Another Santa Fe firm is Welltab, Inc. This started as a one-man shop a year ago and now employs eight to ten people. It has developed oil well logging instruments and a portable strip chart recorder. Some of its manufacturing is handled by the Machine Products & Engineering Co., Inc. in Albuquerque.

Machine Products was established about two years ago. It does custom manufacturing of electronic parts and assemblies. Some of its work includes AEC items. It now has from 10 to 15 employes.

Another Albuquerque two-year-old is the C-G Electronics Corp. This firm manufactures radio controls for model airplanes. These are sold by hobby shops and model airplane dealers throughout the nation, and have received favorable comment in Model Airplane News. The proprietors, Harold Poulsen and Frank Hoover, are former employes of the Sandia Corp. They employ from 10 to 15 persons and are now planning a new and larger plant.

An additional firm interested in consumer goods is ARF Products, which has a branch plant in Raton, N. M. The main plant in Chicago makes antennas for the armed forces, television sets, and a hi-fi record-player. The branch was started in Raton to assemble television sets for a community aerial. Now it is producing cabinets for one model of the home plant's hi-fi record-player. ARF plans to manufacture a complete record player in Raton.

NEW MEXICO HAS ADVANTAGES

These companies find that doing business in New Mexico has a number of advantages. In addition to the markets and manpower provided directly by government work, they find that AEC projects have fostered a number of high grade machine shops. These are very important to newly-established electronics firms. Without them, the new firms would have either to install costly machines for one-time items or let the orders go.

A first-rate manufactured product needs a fine finish, and that is where the Southwest Plating and Metal Finishing Co. serves the electronics field. Established in Albuquerque early in 1955 by Ray J. Kaehr, this firm both aids and augments the industry.

Albuquerque also has tool and die shops, a private research laboratory, cabinet and metal box makers, plastic firms, a screen process firm, technical writers, and a constellation of parts suppliers.

In Albuquerque also are more than a dozen chapters of technical and scientific societies providing new ideas and national contacts. The University of New Mexico's engineering departments also provide centers for industrial training and information.

New Mexico's lack of humidity is an asset to the manufacturer of delicate instruments. And the climate and easygoing spirit of the region encourage the skilled worker to settle down and resist the offers of higher-paying but more congested areas.

The chief drawbacks encountered by New Mexico's electronic equipment manufacturers seem to be lack of capital and simple growing pains. On government orders, they are required to prove financial responsibility with cash. This, as some of them say, is "Dollar for dollar". This requirement favors the large producers, who as a matter of fact get most of the contracts. There are nine or ten factory representatives in Albuquerque obtaining orders for electronics

(continued on page 8)

(continued from front page)

indicated for New Mexico.

In contrast to a series of gains earlier this year, however, employment appears to be levelling off this fall. Slight increases in manufacturing and government jobs were almost offset by a decline in construction.

As you will observe in a study of building indexes on this page, construction appears to be declining compared to earlier months of this year. But the level of building activity compares favorably with 1954.

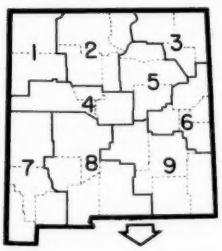
Mining activity remains high. Potash and zinc production increased slightly over September, but copper and lead declined a little. The fluctuations are not large enough to be significant. Both output and employment compare favorably with last year.

Oil production is at a high level, too. However, October's gain is somewhat exaggerated by the fact that cutbacks--caused by a refinery fire--were restored during the month. The petroleum figures will improve significantly in the next few months because the Oil Conservation Commission increased the allowable quotas in November and ordered a further increase for January.

BUSINESS ACTIVITY IN NEW MEXICO

	October Index (1947-49 mo. av. = 100)	Per Cent Change October 1955 From Sept. 1955	Per Cent Change October 1955 From Oct. 1954
Index of Business Activity	202.1	+ 3.5	+ 8.5
Sales of Retail Stores	178.8	+ 2.9	+ 16.4
Apparel Stores	145.0	+ 13.3	+ 10.3
Automotive Dealers	183.1	+ 3.3	+ 37.0
Subsistence Stores	182.7	- 0.3	+ 5.6
Furniture & Appliances	213.4	+ 17.9	+ 43.9
Building Materials Dealers	162.7	- 1.0	+ 20.8
Other Retail Stores	175.6	+ 2.8	+ 10.9
Amusement Sales	135.5	- 23.4	+ 2.9
Service Sales	225.3	+ 1.5	+ 19.0
Contractors' Sales	335.6	+ 19.4	+ 44.9
Wholesale Sales	127.5	- 6.0	+ 5.1
Public Utility Sales	149.0	- 1.2	- 6.8
Manufacturers' Sales	311.3	+ 34.3	- 8.1
Life Insurance Sales	353.4	- 1.0	+ 11.6
Bank Debits	209.1	+ 7.2	+ 14.7
Bank Loans & Discounts	184.9	+ 9.8	+ 23.9
Demand Deposits	158.7	+ 5.7	+ 6.6
Time Deposits	237.8	+ 3.9	+ 22.7
Business Failure Liabilities	30.6	--	- 89.2
Postal Receipts	216.0	+ 4.1	+ 4.7
Wage Employment	139.4	+ 0.1	+ 4.0
Manufacturing	182.5	+ 0.6	+ 6.5
Mining	129.3	+ 2.1	+ 10.4
Transportation & Utilities	124.0	- 1.6	+ 2.2
Trade	141.0	0.0	+ 6.3
Finance	207.8	- 1.6	+ 3.4
Services & Miscellaneous	106.2	+ 0.9	+ 1.3
Government	161.9	+ 1.5	+ 2.9
Contract Construction	118.7	- 5.1	- 0.7
Building Permits - Total	226.2	- 2.6	+ 2.1
Residential	263.8	+ 34.2	- 2.5
Non-Residential	130.0	- 61.0	- 11.4
Petroleum Production	178.9	+ 11.7	+ 6.2
Electric Power Production	185.4	- 8.9	+ 10.9
Metallics Production - Total	91.0	- 1.2	+ 41.9
Mine Production - Copper	113.9	- 3.7	+ 3.0
Mine Production - Lead	50.1	- 5.1	+490.9
Mine Production - Zinc	63.0	+ 7.3	--
Mine Production - Potash	237.4	+ 2.2	+ 8.5
All Farm Prices	85.2	+ 1.7	- 5.0
Livestock Prices	85.2	+ 1.5	- 4.2
Crop Prices	91.3	+ 0.4	- 7.2

BUSINESS ACTIVITY BY DISTRICTS



	November Index (1947-49 mo. av. = 100)	Per Cent Change November 1955 From Oct. 1955	Per Cent Change November 1955 From Nov. 1954
Bank Debits	215.8	+ 3.2	+ 9.2
Bank Loans & Discounts	194.5	+ 5.2	+ 11.2
Demand Deposits	165.0	+ 4.0	+ 6.3
Time Deposits	239.9	+ 0.9	+ 22.2
Building Permits - Total	140.3	- 38.0	- 51.4
Residential	130.8	- 50.4	- 49.3
Non-Residential	161.9	+ 24.6	- 63.1
Postal Receipts	213.4	- 1.2	+ 5.6
All Farm Prices	80.0	- 6.1	- 7.9
Livestock Prices	77.9	- 8.6	- 9.6
Crop Prices	92.5	+ 1.3	- 2.8

District	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
November 1955 Compared With October 1955									
Bank Debits	+ 2.1	+ 13.5	- 3.9	- 2.2	+ 4.3	+ 5.4	+ 8.6	+ 13.8	+ 5.4
Loans and Discounts	+ 5.6	+ 13.5	+ 25.9	- 13.2	+ 64.6	+ 55.7	+ 11.1	+ 42.2	+ 17.6
Demand Deposits	- 1.9	- 3.4	+ 0.4	+ 6.5	+ 8.7	+ 4.7	+ 7.9	+ 7.9	+ 5.2
Time Deposits	+ 1.1	+ 0.9	- 0.1	+ 0.7	+ 1.5	- 8.6	+ 2.8	+ 1.1	+ 7.3
Postal Receipts	- 6.4	-- 4.9	- 7.3	+ 1.8	+ 26.0	+ 8.6	- 6.4	+ 2.7	- 4.4
November 1955 Compared With November 1954									
Bank Debits	+ 12.7	+ 14.4	+ 14.3	+ 9.4	+ 26.5	+ 3.3	+ 5.7	+ 26.2	+ 1.0
Loans and Discounts	+ 16.1	+ 8.5	+ 54.8	+ 1.3	+ 16.7	+ 24.2	+ 0.9	+ 65.6	+ 10.2
Demand Deposits	+ 11.8	+ 18.6	- 0.2	+ 10.1	- 8.2	+ 1.6	+ 1.3	+ 14.3	- 6.1
Time Deposits	+ 23.0	+ 24.8	+ 13.2	+ 17.4	+ 8.3	+ 20.0	+ 7.8	+144.6	+ 44.2
Postal Receipts	- 5.4	+ 4.4	+ 9.4	+ 13.4	+ 38.9	+ 4.2	- 5.6	+ 7.3	+ 2.7

Sources of Data:
Retail Sales Data: N. M. Bureau of Revenue
Potash Production: N. M. Bureau of Revenue
Petroleum Production: N. M. Bureau of Revenue
Life Insurance Sales (New Ordinary): Life Insurance Agency Management Association
Wage Employment (all categories): N. M. Employment Security Commission
Electric Power Production: Federal Power Commission
Metallics Production: U. S. Bureau of Mines
Farm Prices: U. S. Agricultural Marketing Service
Bank Data (all series), Postal Receipts, Building Permits: Bureau of Business Research
Business Failure Liabilities: Dun & Bradstreet, Inc.

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Watch Automotive Sales

OCTOBER's retail sales figures strengthen our prediction that New Mexico will come mighty close to a billion-dollar retail sales year in 1955.

Retail sales for the first ten months of this year totalled more than $811 million, which means that, if sales average $94 million in each of the final two months of the year, the billion-dollar total will be reached.

Automotive sales are likely to add up to a quarter of a billion dollars in New Mexico this year. The 10-month total is $229,580,400, a really exceptional amount. This is about 30 per cent greater than automotive sales in the first 10 months of 1954.

Our figures, based on school tax returns, include both new and used car, truck, and tractor sales, plus repairs and sales of accessories and other items handled by filling stations and automotive stores. Because of these maintenance items, automotive sales figures from month to month do not show the seasonal fluctuations one might expect from sales of new cars alone.

The pattern for the past 22 months appears as follows:

Month	1954	1955
January	$ 16,808,200	$ 17,973,600
February	16,876,900	20,845,600
March	16,450,300	20,938,100
April	16,028,500	23,133,400
May	18,031,300	22,289,000
June	19,996,200	24,897,100
July	18,330,400	26,200,200
August	18,500,200	24,182,300
September	17,675,000	24,160,200
October	18,218,100	24,960,900
November	19,397,900	
December	21,022,100	

Industry leaders are now predicting some decrease in new car sales during 1956, and at first one might expect automotive sales to return to something near the 1954 levels. But such pessimism disregards the larger number of cars and trucks now on our highways. Repairs and upkeep of existing cars will strengthen automotive sales totals in the coming months no matter what the cyclical effects of new car sales happen to be. Increases in the number of two-car families in New Mexico, plus population gains and price increases, will also help sales totals in 1956.

Do you have a business associate that would be interested in this issue of New Mexico Business? Send us his name... and we will send him a complimentary copy immediately. Or, if you would like him to read about business in New Mexico during the next year, send us his name and $2 and we will add him to our subscribers list. Use this coupon:

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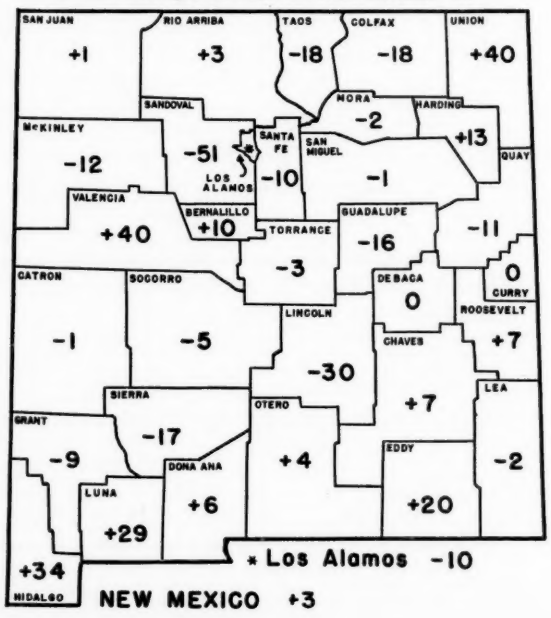
CITY AND STATE.....

How Retail Sales Compare with Last Year's

Per Cent Change: October '55 from October '54



Retail Sales in New Mexico Counties

OCTOBER 1955

(add 000's)

County	Apparel	Automotive	Subsistence	Furniture & Appliances	Building Material	Other	Total
Bernalillo	$1,127	$ 8,108	$ 6,797	$2,141	$3,171	$ 7,084	$28,428
Catron	0	48	49	7	14	20	138
Chaves	205	1,607	1,365	453	470	1,367	5,467
Colfax	27	329	375	30	139	326	1,226
Curry	129	771	679	183	192	541	2,495
De Baca	1	126	69	4	44	107	351
Dona Ana	72	1,074	902	127	448	723	3,346
Eddy	191	1,388	1,490	484	507	1,574	5,634
Grant	31	515	437	117	88	384	1,572
Guadalupe	4	225	150	21	17	118	535
Harding	0	65	3	0	2	62	132
Hidalgo	10	226	203	31	75	116	661
Lea	208	2,110	1,319	208	498	2,415	6,758
Lincoln	6	143	152	1	97	152	551
Los Alamos	18	106	215	4	2	130	475
Luna	42	511	214	112	23	261	1,163
McKinley	40	639	633	82	114	681	2,189
Mora	2	38	15	0	(a)	68	123
Otero	59	416	556	86	336	507	1,960
Quay	41	424	368	25	69	239	1,166
Rio Arriba	3	372	261	31	66	397	1,130
Roosevelt	50	468	388	119	185	275	1,485
Sandoval	0	80	159	(a)	1	166	406
San Juan	76	1,024	663	66	313	1,819	3,961
San Miguel	10	320	325	15	58	312	1,040
Santa Fe	164	1,050	1,086	153	353	1,138	3,944
Sierra	4	175	167	13	24	133	516
Socorro	12	204	179	17	24	166	602
Taos	3	199	263	36	20	164	685
Torrance	1	122	119	5	24	126	397
Union	22	263	185	27	43	137	677
Valencia	24	1,167	468	26	73	477	2,235
Unallocated	290	648	810	804	436	3,507	6,495
Total	$2,872	$24,961	$21,064	$5,428	$7,926	$25,692	$87,943

(a) Less than $1,000.
Source: School Tax Division, N. M. Bureau of Revenue.

Comparative figures for October 1954 can be found in the December 1954 issue of New Mexico Business. This map (on page 6) gives a percentage comparison.

Electronics (continued from page 4)

manufacturers of other states.

As might be expected of enterprises that start in garages and small shops, zoning restrictions prove a barrier when expansion time comes. The cost of moving into leased quarters or building a new plant is a financial burden that comes just at the wrong time. (Yet the advocates of zoning argue somewhat reasonably that it is only by keeping residential neighborhoods free of industry that Albuquerque can attract the high caliber non-migratory personnel that industry wants. -- Editor's Note)

New Mexico's new electronics firms have not devoted much time and money to promotion thus far. Technical publications, through their "New Products" departments, have given very helpful publicity to some of these firms. However, a new product can be new but once. After that, the producer is on his own. The problems of advertising and sales will grow as these New Mexico firms seek more civilian business.

New Mexico's electronics companies are small compared to similar establishments elsewhere. Yet a start has been made here, and these firms are demonstrating that electronics is a "natural" for the state.

NEW MEXICO BUSINESS
Bureau of Business Research
University of New Mexico
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